Three Day Road by Joseph Boyden

*Chapter 16 (Mistatimwak, Horses) Analysis*

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**Chapter Summary:**

* Begins with Xavier and Niska continuing their canoe journey
* After moving to Albert, Breech orders Elijah and Xavier to move out in an advance position and attack the Germans from their new hideout sniping dugout
* Xavier tells Elijah the story of when they were on the huge ship with horses sailing to England
* Xavier took the lives of two horses with broken legs in order to end their suffering
* Was declared that Xavier had the “ability of judgment under duress”, which prevented him from getting arrested
* Five days later, Elijah and Xavier watch as the horses are dropped into the sea

**Significant and Interesting Quotes:**

***Page 177 paragraph 1: “My body cries out for the medicine so loudly that I decide not to even try hide what I do.”***

* Said by Xavier while in the canoe with Niska
* Refers to Xavier’s morphine addiction, Xavier takes morphine in front of Niska
* Shows strong addiction
* Shows character: desperation, because addiction to a drug is considered bad, but doesn’t even care what Niska thinks of him anymore
* Very harsh using words like cries and loudly
* Imagery: body screaming out in desperation for the morphine
* Inner conflict: Xavier vs himself, needs to fight his desperate want for morphine

***Page 181 paragraph 7: “We slither closer like snakes until we are a stone’s throw away, lie and listen, watching for a glint of movement.”***

* Said by Xavier as him and Elijah are travelling to their new sniper dugout
* Provides excellent imagery- snakes slithering, Elijah and Xavier close to the enemy, watching for glints (gives imagery of the glint of a rifle or helmet)
* Onomatopoeia (word that sounds like what it’s describing): slithering, describes how sly and stealthy they were
* Simile (a comparison using like or as): “We slither closer like snakes...” compares Elijah and Xavier to sly, slithering snakes
* Also provides plot development: suspenseful scene where Elijah and Xavier are trying to get to their new sniper dugout without being spotted by the Fritz

**Questions:**

Q: ***Why does Xavier want to force the other soldiers to recognize him?***

* Xavier quotes “Me, I’m clearly invisible to the officers. How is it that Breech refuses to recognize that it isn’t only Elijah out there killing Fritz? We are a team. If nobody will recognize this, maybe I will force them to.”
* Xavier feels that he is doing just as much of a good job as Elijah
* Elijah is the only one getting credit
* He thinks that this has to do with race even though they are both native
* Elijah is the only one that puts the effort to be like the *wemistikoshiw* people
* Xavier sticks to his culture and occasionally rebels against his instructors
* Xavier also quotes that he is going to try harder to have them recognize him and to feel equal to Elijah

Q: ***Why does Xavier love the horses and what does this explain about his character?***

* Xavier loved the horses because he has voluntarily taken the responsibility for them
* All the men on the ship were violently sick, including Xavier
* However, he stayed down in the cellar with the horses and tried to calm them down
* Xavier quotes on page 183 “I feel comfort with animals. They make me feel closer to land.”
* This shows that Xavier is a very nature-friendly person and respects the horses the same way he respects people
* When Xavier saw that the horses had a large bloody spot on its flank, he immediately tried applying salve and attempted to cure the horses
* Xavier then kills two horses with broken legs because he did not want them to suffer with the pain
* Even though what he did was the most intelligent course of action, he would have been brought up on charges if not for the intervention of some superior officers
* This shows that Xavier would risk charges for the horses

Q***: How do you think Xavier’s morphine addiction makes him feel, both physically and mentally?***

* Xavier’s morphine addiction helps him lessen the pain of his amputated leg and the horrific memories of the events during the war
* Morphine is a drug that makes one have a feeling of extreme wellbeing and content mood along with drowsiness with feelings of physical pleasure radiating out from the whole body
* Xavier quote on page 177 “My cries out for the medicine so loudly that I decide not to even try to hide what I do.”
* This shows that the pain is so unbearable that Xavier does not even try to hide injecting the needle into his arm in from of Niska
* When Xavier takes the morphine, his body fills with pleasure and he falls into a drowsy mode
* However physically, the morphine is slowly killing him, because he is addicted to the medication and without it, he will die
* All in all, morphine for Xavier has its pros and cons.